

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of the claims in the above-captioned patent application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A fast-deployable light weight tripod, comprising

a) a center support for supporting a load, provided with three peripheral hinge members;
b) at least three multi-stage telescoping leg assemblies each attached to one of said hinge members, wherein each leg assembly comprises a first compression-resistant member, a second compression-resistant member, and third compression-resistant member, wherein said first and second compression-resistant members are interconnected by an upper telescopic joint, and said second and third compression-resistant member are interconnected by a lower telescopic joint ~~each leg assembly comprising at least two compression-resistant members interconnected by a telescopic joint, wherein each leg assembly comprises: [[;]]~~

c) ~~at least one~~ a first cam locking unit associated with each said upper telescopic joint and a second cam locking unit associated with said lower telescopic joint, wherein when said first and second cam locking units are engaged, said leg assembly is extendable but is not retractable, and when said first and second cam locking units are disengaged, said leg assembly is both extendable and retractable, each locking unit having a first engaged position which allows extension of said leg assembly but prevents relative axial movement which would shorten the length of said leg assembly, and a second disengaged position wherein said assemblies are free to move in either axial direction, each locking unit being urged towards its ~~wherein said first and second cam locking units are urged towards their engaged position for automatic locking of said tripod in its deployed position with said cam locking being effected by pressure on said cam unit from its associated extended leg;~~

d) a hand accessible release element arranged to disengage said second cam locking unit, wherein said hand accessible release element is connected to a linkage for each leg assembly for independently releasing said at least one cam locking unit associated therewith, thereby enabling the shortening of the length of said assembly, and said linkage is arranged to disengage said first cam locking unit when said hand accessible release element disengages said second cam locking unit; and

e) a first shoe positioned between said at least one first cam locking unit and a corresponding one of said leg assemblies said leg assembly, and a second shoe positioned

between said second cam locking unit and said leg assembly, wherein said first and second shoes
~~shoe is~~ are adapted to reduce an amount of stress applied to said ~~corresponding~~ leg assembly by
said first and second cam locking units, respectively.

Claim 2 (original): A tripod according to claim 1, further comprising a foldable hinged three-arm restriction member hingedly attached to said legs to prevent excessive spread of said leg assemblies.

Claim 3 (canceled)

Claim 4 (currently amended): A tripod according to claim 1, wherein the locking force provided by said first and second cam locking units when in its engaged position automatically increases as weight load increases on said center support.

Claim 5 (canceled)

Claim 6 (canceled)

Claim 7 (canceled)

Claim 8 (currently amended): A tripod according to claim ~~[[7]]~~ 1, wherein said further hand-accessible release element is a press button.

Claim 9 (currently amended): A tripod according to claim ~~[[6]]~~ 1, wherein said hand-accessible release element ~~disengaging a cam locking unit at said lower telescopic joint~~ is an external lever disposed on an inner face of said lower telescopic joint.

Claim 10 (original): A tripod according to claim 9, further comprising a foldable hinged three-arm restriction member hingedly attached to said legs to prevent excessive spread of said leg assemblies, wherein said hinged three-arm restriction member, is when folded, positioned to substantially, simultaneously press against each of the release levers associated with each of said legs, thus disengaging cam locking units on all legs at both telescopic joints, whereby the tripod can be folded and retracted without the need for separate manual release of any of said locking devices.

Claim 11 (original): A tripod according to claim 2, wherein the arms of said foldable hinged three-arm restriction member are telescopically extendible, operation of each restriction member telescopic joint being controlled by a further cam locking unit.

Claim 12 (currently amended): A tripod according to claim 1, wherein ~~each of~~ said first and second cam locking units ~~[[is]]~~ are provided with spring means urging each of said units towards its engaged position.

Claim 13 (canceled)

Claim 14 (original): A tripod according to claim 1, wherein each compression-resistant member comprises at least one plastic, fiber-reinforced tube.

Claim 15 (original): A tripod according to claim 14, wherein said fiber-reinforced tube is reinforced with carbon fibers.

Claim 16 (original): A tripod according to claim 1, able to support a 30 kg load at a height of 1.5 meters and weighing no more than 3.4 kg.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation that the Examiner indicates that claims 6-10 would be allowable if rewritten in independent format, including the limitations of their base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants are amending original claim 1 to incorporate the limitations of original claims 5 and 6 and to clarify the claimed invention. Applicants also are amending original claims 4, 8, 9, and 12 to correspond to the clarifying amendments to original claim 1. Moreover, Applicants are canceling original claims 3, 5-7, and 13, without prejudice. No new matter is added by the foregoing amendments and these amendments are fully supported by the specification. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the above-captioned patent application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.